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Maryland makes intermodal facility short list

- by Scott Dance, Staff

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The Maryland Department of Transportation has crafted a short list of sites for a long-awaited transportation facility that would let cargo travel through the port from ships to trains to trucks while avoiding a bottleneck at the Howard Street tunnel downtown.

It is kicking off a process to develop the facility with a series of public workshops.

The short list includes four possible sites for the facility in Anne Arundel, Howard and Prince George's counties.

The project aims to keep the Port of Baltimore competitive with competing ports because low clearance in a tunnel under Howard Street downtown limits how much cargo can be carried via train. Container cargo is typically "double-stacked" on trains, but that is impossible when traveling through the Howard Street tunnel. Port and transportation officials have been working for years to determine how to improve the tunnel or bypass it.

"By creating a new transfer facility at an appropriate industrial site south of Baltimore along the I-95 corridor, new doors of commerce will open for Maryland that will benefit the Port of Baltimore, the State's economy and the thousands of jobs in our state that rely on a vibrant freight industry," state transportation Secretary **Beverly Swaim-Staley** said in a statement.

The four sites being considered for what is being called the Baltimore-Washington Rail Intermodal Facility are:

- A portion of the Jessup Correctional Institution in Anne Arundel County, east of the Camden rail line between Brock Ridge Road and Maryland Route 175;
- Property north of Hanover Road between the Camden Line and Race Road in Howard County;
- Property west of the Camden Line and north of Montevideo Road in Howard County; and,
- Property east of the Camden Line and west of Maryland Route 201 between Sunnyside Avenue and Powder Mill Road in Prince George's County.

Site acquisition is in early stages; not all property owners have been contacted, according to the transportation department. The state's goal is to complete construction and begin using the site by 2015.

Transportation officials will hold workshops along with rail operator [CSX Corp.](#) (NYSE: CSX) briefing the public on the vision for the facility and seeking feedback.

The workshops will be held:

- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on April 20 at Beltsville Academy in Beltsville;
- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on April 21 at Hebron-Harmon Elementary School in Hanover; and,
- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on April 27 at Elkridge Landing Middle School in Elkridge.

A handful of criteria were used in choosing the sites. They included that the site had to be south of the Howard Street tunnel, at least 70 acres, close to a major highway and close to CSX tracks.

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